

A Hale and Hearty Hello

SASS 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Convention, San Antonio, Texas

Attendance was down for a number of reasons. First the date got moved from Christmas to the second week in January. Many attendees couldn't take the time off or move their vacation plans.

The schedule change also cost SASS a number of vendors. I walked over to the vendor area, 2 blocks away, and there were only about 12 vendors. Not many people walking around the vendor area.

And like last year the weather was cold and windy. The cold front that moved across the mid-west got down into San Antonio.

Next year is already scheduled for The Green Valley Casino in Henderson.

Because of the schedule change or apathy the TG attendance was way down.

My charge for the TG meeting was to ask the Wild Bunch representatives if they are going to change what the TG's approve why should we bother voting.

Misty Moonshine, the CEO for SASS, started the meeting by saying how SASS wouldn't exist without the members and the clubs. They appreciate us and want us to help them with a new member campaign. She left at that point.

As the discussions on the items on the agenda progressed Hip Shot, the moderator for the meeting, mentioned how there is a lot of apathy in SASS right now. They need to figure out how to get everyone engaged. Both the members and the TG's need to get more involved. He said that only one third of the clubs were represented in person or by proxy.

The first day we reviewed the 6 items to be voted on and 3 of the 4 items for discussion. During the discussion a few people made comments about why should we vote.

At one point when discussing the dropped round issue a TG asked why don't we just change it and get it over with. Hip Shot said that one member of the WB wouldn't let that happen. The TG asked why is that person here. Hip Shot said you don't want that.

We adjourned to continue with the last item for discussion, which was the lever open or closed rule that was implemented and then stopped by the Wild Bunch. And the TG's would vote on the 6 items the next day.

During the discussion the TG's were told that once the rule was implemented shooters started re-staging guns closed, on purpose, which was not the intent of the rule. And the rule wasn't being applied the same in the organization. So the WB pulled the rule back.

At this point I asked for the mic and began my asking for the reasons why and how. I asked:

If Misty is so concerned about SASS living or dying being driven by the members why isn't she here to listen and explain why the WB did what it did.

If we discuss an item but one member of the WB would over rule it why isn't he here. We all assume it was Judge Roy Bean.

Your concerned about membership growth and yet most clubs aren't here or voting because of the "why bother" feeling with the WB being the final authority.

If the 6 members of the WB are able to do this why aren't they here with us during the discussions?

As I was asking these questions I heard several hrrrugh's and that's right like from the TG's.

I handed back the mic and the discussion on the lever continued. 5 minutes later Misty Moonshine and Tex joined the meeting. We now had 3 of the 6 WB Board in the room.

Misty took over the meeting and began by explaining why the WB did what they did. She apologized and said they messed up by not communicating why they did it. They should have communicated the reasons why and what was going to happen next. Which was to resolve the issue at this TG meeting. She took the blame for poor communication and understood why the TG's and clubs felt the way they do. She apologized again and promised that in the future any action the WB takes will be communicated to the members. She also said that the way this happened was wrong. In the future the TG's, the ROC, and the WB will be in sync when or if anything like this happens again.

She then took over the discussion on the open lever issue and ran the meeting. Which in my opinion is what the CEO should be doing.

The items for voting and the results;

- 1) **Should we institute the following standard for all style/costume categories when breaking them down by age? Approved** Category rules apply first and then age based rules.
- 2) **Should we change Senior Duelist to comply with that standard? Approved Will be implemented January 1, 2016. Approved** The issue is “seniors” can’t use pistols with adjustable sights.
- 3) **Should we officially acknowledge the shooting category "Frontier Cartridge gunfighter" as a SASS sanctioned/recognized category? Approved.** Gunfighter rules applied first then BP rules.
- 4) **Should the MSV penalty for retrieving a dropped or ejected round be removed if done SAFELY? Failed by 6 votes.** This remains a hotly discussed item at the TG meeting and on the wire. It will be back on the agenda next year.
- 5) **Should conflicts on costume based shooting categories ("B"-Western Men's & Ladies and Classic Cowboy/Cowgirl) Costuming requirement determinations be relegated to the Costume Contest personnel/judges? Where the competitors can battle it out in front of a panel of judges instead of bringing costume issues to the attention of Range Masters and Match Directors to decide if a shirt or boots are in compliance with the rules. Failed.** Everyone felt the Match Director should handle any protests.
- 6) **Should the Category of Grand Dame have the name changed to "Golden Girls"? Failed.** It was felt the “Golden Girls” would remind everyone of the goofy TV show and Grand Dame was more appropriate.

#### **NON VOTING DISCUSSION ITEMS:**

***\*Discussion Items are not on the ballot for action. Discussion & Clarification only at this time.***

**Discuss the increasing incidents of "Shooting on the move", its implications, and safety concerns.** The issue here is at some shoots they are writing stages that say from position A to position B shoot the XX targets, pistol, rifle, shotgun, Shooters are starting to walk as they shoot. They are not recognizing the basketball rule. Plant one foot, shoot, hammer down or open action, then move. The discussion was to leave the “Traveling” rule in place.

**Discuss the possibility and any implications of the shooting category of B-Western/Ladies B-Western's costuming allowances to be expanded to include silver-screen style type costuming.** No real decision here but further discussion. Shooters are showing up in Mexican attire that meets the rules but it’s not mentioned in the rules. Right now everyone thinks you have to show up as a reflection of Roy, Gene, or Hoppy,

**Final discussion item, the rewrite of the closed action rule.** The Branson Summit on this issue did not address levers that were left open and empty on purpose, when not by accident. The Wild Bunch changed the 2013 Summit decision and reverted back to the old rule requiring the action to be open, even after it is left to go to the next gun.

Misty ran this discussion after the explaining of why WB pulled the rule back. Shooters were closing actions on purpose. After creating 270 words to describe what was intended it got down to dropping one word from the existing rule. Instead of saying long guns must be restaged "open and empty" it will now say "restaged empty". Then the shooter is the only one who can touch a long gun if it's closed after staging. They must show clear. And if it isn't the existing rules apply for empty round or live round. The straw vote of the TG's approved that wording. Misty would take it back to the ROC and the WB and said she would have an answer in 5 days. And she did. The results are;

**Long guns "closed/open" issue: (from 11th Convention, Dec. 2013)**

- Long guns will be cleared and discarded with barrels pointing safely downrange. If the action of a long gun closes after being cleared then the competitor will, at the conclusion of the stage, show it to be clear to the TO. No person other than the competitor may handle the long gun prior to opening the action and showing the long gun to be clear. Appropriate penalties will apply if the long gun is not clear.

**Shooting on the move:**

- The rules for movement (Basketball Traveling rule) does not relate to shooting on the move . Shooting on the move is expressly disallowed. The "basketball traveling rule" was originally intended to pertain to a competitor who inadvertently cocks a firearm in a position other than the designated firing position or was moving both feet whilst engaging targets at the firing position. One foot may be moved to adjust stance or correct balance. The Basketball Traveling rule was not intended to relate to multiple movements between shots (e.g. Shooting multiple shots during continuous movement.)

At the next shoot I will go over the rules changes in detail so we all understand.

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